

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK

YELLOWSTONE PARK, WYO.

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

Copy from FILE 143.

MONTHLY REPORT

for

January, 1918.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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OFFICE OF SUPERVISOR

February 7th

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The Director,
National Park Service,
Washington, D. C.

Sir:

I have the honor to submit my report of conditions in the park for the month of ~~January~~, 1918.

GENERAL STATEMENT.

The Yellowstone National Park was set aside by Act of Congress March 1, 1872, (Secs. 2474 and 2475, R. S., 17 Stat., 32) as a pleasuring-ground for the benefit and enjoyment of the people, and placed under the exclusive control of the Secretary of the Interior, who was authorized to make such rules and regulations as he deems necessary for the care and management of the park. It is situated principally in northwestern Wyoming, but laps over a little more than two miles into Montana on the north, and almost two miles into Montana and Idaho on the west. Its dimensions are about 62 miles north and south, and about 54 miles east and west, giving an area of about 3,348 square miles, or 2,142,720 acres. Its altitude is 6,000 to 11,000 feet.

The park was governed by civilian superintendents, assisted by a few scouts, from the time it was set aside until August 10, 1886, when, under authority contained in the Sundry Civil Bill approved March 3, 1883, at the request of the Secretary of the Interior the Secretary of War detailed troops of United States Cavalry to protect the park, the commanding officer acting as park superintendent under the direct orders of the Secretary of the Interior. On October 16, 1916, by mutual agreement of the heads of the two Departments, the troops were withdrawn from the park, and a civilian supervisor, with a corps of 25 rangers for patrol and protection work, and a few civilian employees necessary for other duties, were appointed by the Secretary of the Interior to replace them. The Sundry Civil Bill, approved June 12, 1917, (Public No. 21, 65th Congress) contained a clause which made it necessary for the troops to be returned to the park for the purpose of patrolling it, and they were returned on June

26, 1917, relieving the park supervisor of so much of the duties as pertained to "protection."

The maintenance and construction of roads, bridges and improvements in Yellowstone Park, is carried on by special appropriation under the War Department, the work being locally in charge of an officer of the U. S. Engineer Department known as the District Engineer Officer, who reports directly to the Chief of Engineers. 278.8 miles of main road and 24.75 miles of secondary road are located in the park, and 106.5 miles of main road is maintained by the same department in the forest reserves adjoining the park on the south and east. Major George B. Verrill, Engineers, U. S. Reserves, is at the present time in charge of improvement work in the park, as District Engineer. A copy of his report for the month of January will be transmitted as soon as received.

The local office of the U. S. Weather Bureau, Department of Agriculture, is in charge of Mr. G. E. Lawton, Observer.

Park Headquarters for all departments and most of the concessioners, is located at Mammoth Hot Springs. A telephone system connects Headquarters with the sub-stations. A hydro-electric power plant furnishes the light for the buildings and grounds at Headquarters. Water, electric current, and telephone service are furnished other departments of the government in the park, by the National Park Service, without charge. During January the hydro-electric power plant was run daily from 4:00 P. M. until 8:00 A. M., and was continued during the day when any necessity existed.

Funds for purposes of administration of the park, and for the care and maintenance of buffalo and other animals, are obtained from special appropriations by Congress, and from revenues derived from various sources in the park.

CONDITIONS FOR THE MONTH OF JANUARY.

The monthly mean temperature was 16.2 degrees, which was 1.4 degrees colder than normal for January. The lowest temperature recorded during the month was -32.2 on the 31st. This is the lowest January temperature recorded since the establishment of the Weather Bureau Station in the park in 1903. The precipitation during the month was 1.98 inches, a little less than normal. Average depth of snow on the ground at the end of January was 12.7 inches, which was about half an inch more than normal. The snow, however, was distributed over the ground more evenly than usual, with few drifts,

making travel between Headquarters and Gardiner good for both sleighs and motor vehicles. The Gardiner Slide remained frozen up and gave no further trouble. The weather conditions were reasonably good for the game animals, and they were reported to be in excellent condition.

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EMPLOYEES.

A total of 22 permanent and 2 temporary employees were carried on the pay roll during the month of January, namely: One chief clerk, (acting superintendent) two clerks, one chief scout, nine scouts, one buffalo keeper, one assistant buffalo keeper, two telephone switchboard operators, one lineman, one electrician, two assistant electricians, (one the entire month and one from the first to noon on the eighth) one laborer, one temporary plumber, and one temporary lineman, (the latter being employed on the 25th.) In addition to these there was one man employed with horses and dogs to exterminate carnivorous animals.

Distribution - regular employees: Chief Scout McBride began preparations for feeding hay to the wild animals at the beginning of the month, and the actual feeding began on January 5th. He was assisted from the beginning by Scouts Trischman, Pound, and Lawson, and since the 14th by Scout Smith, in addition. Two single teams and the 2-ton truck, equipped with hay racks, were used until, towards the end of the month, when the snow got too deep to use the truck with economy, and a four-line mule team was substituted for it. Three teams and five men are now constantly employed in the work of feeding the animals. About 3,000 elk and 350 antelope are fed daily near Gardiner and Mammoth. About 125 tons of hay had been used to the end of January. Scout Little assisted the detachments of the new military garrison to prepare for their trips to Riverside and Lake Stations, and went with them to the stations on January 5th to 11th. Since that time he has patrolled along the north line, mostly west from Gardiner. He was accompanied on his patrols along the north line on skis, by Scout Brooks, who also, patrolled to Lower Blacktail, Grevice Mountain and vicinity. Scout Anderson made steady patrols between Yellowstone River and the north line of the park, and when practicable has made some patrols outside of the park near the north line. He killed 7 coyotes and 4 mountain lions during the month. Scout Lacombe was stationed the entire month at Tower Falls, and patrolled that vicinity. Scout Charles J. Smith was stationed with him up to the 14th, when he was called in to assist in feeding wild animals. Scout Dewing remained at Gallatin Station until the arrival of the detachment of soldiers from the 11th Cavalry, on January 3d, when he returned to Gardiner and is charged with making patrols on the north line near

Gardiner and the extermination of carnivora. He killed ten coyotes during the month. Steve Elkins was employed by the day with saddle horses and trained dogs, to exterminate carnivorous animals. He killed 3 mountain lions and 5 coyotes. His services were dispensed with at the end of January, as he did not seem to be making satisfactory progress. The buffalo keeper and his assistant were on duty with the tame buffalo at the farm on Lamar River. Other employees were on duty at Headquarters, operating and maintaining telephone lines, hydro-electric power plant, buildings, etc., and caring for the horses belonging to the Department which were brought in from pasture at the buffalo farm on January 14th, and are being fed alfalfa hay.

Leaves of absence: Employees were on regular annual leave of absence during the month of January as follows:

Clerk L. M. Mac Rae, 1st to 1st.

Clerk George T. Dustman, 1st to 31st; 26 days.

Buffalo Keeper Thomas G. Frazier, 1st to noon of the 2d; $\frac{1}{2}$ day.

Assistant Electrician Robert Oster, 1st to noon of the 8th; $3\frac{1}{2}$ days.

Resignations: Assistant Electrician Robert Oster tendered his resignation at noon, January 8th.

Vacancies: At the close of January 31st there were the following vacancies: 1 assistant electrician at \$1200 per annum; (vacancy since noon, January 8th) 1 lineman at \$900 per annum; and one plumber at \$1200 per annum.

ANIMALS. DOMESTIC.

Such driving, saddle and pack animals as were needed for regular work and feeding the game, were kept up and fed hay and grain. Surplus horses were kept on pasture at the buffalo farm until the 14th, when they were brought in on account of the severe weather, and have since been kept in corrals at Headquarters and fed alfalfa hay purchased for the purpose.

FOREST FIRES.

No forest fires occurred during the month.

FISHING.

There was no fishing during the month, except a very little in the Gardiner River below the mouth of the Boiling River, and in the Yellowstone River, near the mouth of the Gardiner River, for whitefish.

IMPROVEMENTS.

The weather conditions were not suitable for improvement work of any extent, except a little that was done at Headquarters by regular employees in the way of repairing telephone instruments, and overhauling machinery at the power plant.

The Yellowstone Park Transportation Company continued the employment of a small number of men at the Mammoth garage, overhauling automobiles and making general repairs.

The Hotel Company built a small ice house near the ones in use by the different branches of the government just below the reservoir, and filled it with ice.

The Yellowstone Park Camping Company put up a supply of ice at Mammoth.

The Park Curio Shop also put up ice for next summer's use.

The U. S. Engineer Department continued to mine coal in the park for that Department and the National Park Service. Engineers were also engaged in making a survey of a location for a new road to take the place of the one in Gardiner Canyon to avoid the expensive "slide". The slide was frozen up during the month, and gave no trouble. Major Verrill's monthly report for January will be transmitted as soon as received. Copy of his special report to the Chief of Engineers, dated January 1, 1918, on the subject of the Gardiner road realignment was transmitted on January 25, and a copy was also made for Mr. Geo. E. Goodwin, C. E., National Park Service, who visited the park January 12th to 14th on his way to Washington, to examine the slide referred to.

MONIES TRANSMITTED.

During January, no monies were transmitted to the Secretary of the Interior or the National Park Service from this office.

NATURAL PHENOMENA.

No changes in the natural phenomena of the park were recorded for the month of January.

VISITORS.

No tourists were registered at the park entrances during the month of January.

Special Visitors: Mr. George E. Goodwin, Civil Engineer of the National Park Service, visited Mammoth Hot Springs January 12th to 14th, while enroute from Glacier National Park to Washington, for the special purpose of inspecting the road three miles north of Mammoth known as the "Gardiner Slide".

Rev. J. F. Pritchard, of Emigrant, Montana, visited the post of Fort Yellowstone and held divine services in the post chapel twice during the month, namely January 13th and 27th.

Mr. Leroy C. Jones, State Game Warden of Idaho, with his deputy, Mr. Thorpe, visited the park on January 31st for the purpose of procuring 50 elk allotted January 4th, to the State of Idaho. They procured their elk and left with them on February 2d.

WILD ANIMALS.

All game are reported in splendid condition. Hay has been fed in the vicinity of Gardiner and along the road from Gardiner to Headquarters, since January 5th, almost every day. Five men and three hay-racks have been kept constantly busy with this work. About 3,000 elk, 350 antelope, 17 mountain sheep, and 50 to 100 deer, come daily for this hay. Approximately 125 tons were fed to the end of January. While it is not considered an absolute necessity to feed the elk under present conditions, I consider it very advisable to feed them for several reasons: (1) The deer, antelope and mountain sheep have been fed hay for so many years that it is necessary to continue feeding them. Experience shows that it is almost an impossibility to feed these animals without feeding quite a large number of elk. Corrals have been constructed for the express purpose of feeding antelope and keeping out the elk, but we find that if an opening is left large enough to admit the antelope, the elk will get their heads through, and soon make an opening large enough to get through. A cow elk will

lie down on the ground and work her head, and eventually her whole body, through a fence if the wire is raised high enough to admit an antelope. (2) Last winter many elk left the park and went down the valley of the Yellowstone River, through necessity of finding forage. They are inclined to repeat this performance this winter, regardless of the necessity, and to hold them back inside the park, a certain amount of feeding is necessary. Even with the feeding, a large number have gone out - estimated at about 2,000 to the present time. So far they are not suffering from ravages of tooth hunters, and steps are being taken by the Forestry Bureau to have three of their rangers, who have little else to do in winter, and who are deputized as state game wardens, look after the interests of these elk. Scout Anderson will assist them so far as practicable, along the park line opposite Gardiner and for several miles both east and west from Gardiner, and if this does not seem to meet the situation, I will ask for authority to hire additional scouts for this special work. (3) The feeding of the elk in the vicinity of the northern entrance is the first step in the direction of their special care and protection, and it creates an excellent impression of the intentions of the National Park Service in carrying on this great work which will eventually bring thousands of winter tourists to the park. Those who have been fortunate enough to see these animals on the feeding grounds along the main road, will usually agree as to the desirability of feeding them, and doing the feeding so far as practicable, near the northern entrance where the public may easily view them.

The work of raising the hay and feeding the animals can be handled much more conveniently and cheaply here, due to the lower altitude and general location near winter headquarters.

Game animals were reported during the month as follows: (Numbers approximate)

	Elk.	Antelope.	Deer.	Mountain Sheep.
Vicinity of Gallatin Station and on the winter range outside of the park northwest from the station, estimated only,.....				
	1,000			
Vicinity of Gardiner - within four miles of same, inside of the park, ..	4,000	350	100	17
Vicinity of Mammoth Hot Springs,	500		75	
Country adjacent to Tower Falls and the Buffalo Farm,.....	5,000			
Seen by patrols from Soda Butte Station,.....	1,200			

	Elk.	Antelope.	Deer.	Mountain Sheep.
North of the Yellowstone River between mouth of Bear Creek and the valley of Slough Creek,.....	7,000		137	34
Outside of the park, down Yellowstone Valley, left during January,.....	2,000			
Totals,.....	20,700	350	328	51

No attempt has been made to make a complete census of the animals, and several important ranges are not included in the above estimates. About 20 dead elk were reported in all, killed by wolves or mountain lions. Two antelope were killed by coyotes near Gardiner. No sign of disease was noted among the elk. A large percentage of calves was noted among the elk. Very slight signs of scab are noted among the little band of mountain sheep ranging in Gardiner Canyon, and arrangements are made for dipping them when the proper time comes.

Buffalo: The tame buffalo are in good condition. One 7-year-old bull that had been lame for several months, was killed on January 29th, under your authority dated January 18th, and the robe and skeleton has been prepared for shipment as a specimen to the Hastings College, Hastings, Nebraska. The leg was found to have been injured so that it would never have been sound again.

Coyotes: Thirty-four coyotes were killed during the month of January.

Wolves: Timber wolves were reported in several different sections of the park, but none were killed during the month.

Mountain Lions: Mr. Steve Elkins was employed throughout the month with his pack of trained dogs to exterminate mountain lions, but succeeded in killing but three. A buffalo bull gored one of his saddle horses while he was at the buffalo farm, January 21st, killing it instantly. Scout Anderson killed four lions during the month, and as he has a pair of dogs that work fairly well on lions, I believe he can handle the lion situation hereafter, and Elkins was dropped from the pay rolls at the end of January.

PROTECTION AND CARE OF GAME.

No cases of poaching were reported during the month of January.

The officers and enlisted men of the new troop ("G", 11th Cavalry) who relieved the 1st Squadron, 7th Cavalry, on December 22, are very agreeable and disposed to do what they can to co-operate in the care of the park, but they are totally inexperienced and it will take several months for them to learn their duties so as to be of much value and it is out of the question for them to learn the territory except in the immediate vicinity of the stations, during the severe weather of winter. In many ways the War Department has seemed fairly indifferent as to the welfare of the small command stationed here, for instance, since the departure of the 7th Cavalry, they have had no transportation whatever in the post, except what they hire or borrow, and they are forced to use excellent cavalry saddle horses for hauling garbage and other necessary work around the post.

ARRESTS AND VIOLATIONS OF THE LAW.

No violations of law in the park were reported, and no arrests were made, during January.

Since January 18th reports have been coming in of the elk leaving the park and going down the Valley of the Yellowstone, to the ranges frequented by them last winter, and from fragmentary reports received I am of the opinion that possibly 2,000 are now outside of the park. The State is, as usual, doing but little if anything to protect these elk, and doubtless a few will be killed for meat - in fact, a few probable cases have already been reported, but most of the noted tooth hunters are busy with legitimate work or have left the country, and I am inclined to believe that the efforts of such men as can be spared by the Forest Service and this office may prevent any large slaughter. Some of the ranchers, however, are complaining bitterly of the damage the elk do to their range and haystacks, and say they will be forced to raise sheep instead of cattle, so they can get the benefit of their own range in summer before the elk get it, if the State does not do something for their better protection.

PROPOSED WORK.

Completion of the pictorial and locational index of structures and improvements in the park, as suggested in your letter of June 15,

1917. Considerable progress was made on this work during January, and it is hoped it can be completed in February.

Care and feeding of wild animals, and destruction of carnivorous animals.

Repair and maintenance of telephone lines, water system, and hydro-electric power plant.

Filing and transferring correspondence and other records of the office, work that has fallen behind during the summer season.

Putting up a supply of ice for next summer's use - work by regular employees.

Very respectfully,

CHESTER A. LINDSEY

Acting Superintendent.

Eng. rep. trans. 5/24, 11/16